Research note

Emotions and Valuations: Notre-Dame de Paris on Fire as a Case Study for Axiological Sociology

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Abstract

The emotional reactions aroused by the fire that partly destroyed Notre-Dame de Paris in April 2019 can be analyzed as "valuations" in the light of the pragmatic sociology of values, since they provide empirically grounded material allowing for the description and modeling of the actual implementations and effects of valuations. After a quick summary of the recent history of the pragmatic turn in sociology as related to the sociology of valuation, and a short reflection on the relationship between emotions and values, the fire of Notre-Dame de Paris is used as a case study in the light of "axiological sociology", a model built on value judgments observed in various contexts, including the display of emotions. This article intends to demonstrate both empirically and theoretically how important it is for the social sciences to consider values as an autonomous issue, deserving to be treated as "axiological facts", as any other kind of social fact.

Keywords: emotions; French sociology; Notre-Dame de Paris; pragmatism; valuations; value registers

Introduction

In April 2019, the fire that partly destroyed Notre-Dame de Paris aroused an impressive number of emotional reactions, be they verbal or behavioral. They can be analyzed as "valuations" in the light of the pragmatic sociology of values: observing and collecting occurrences of emotional demonstrations – be they individual or collective, positive or negative – such as tears, cries, protests and declarations of all kinds provide empirically-grounded material allowing for the description and modeling of actual implementations and effects of valuations. After a quick summary of the recent history of the pragmatic sociology of valuation, the fire at Notre-Dame de Paris will be used as a case study for a sociology of collective emotions regarding the value of national heritage. It will be analyzed in the light of "axiological sociology", a model built on value judgments observed in various contexts. This should let us better understand how important it is for the social sciences to consider values as an autonomous issue, deserving to be treated as "axiological facts", on the same level as any other kind of social facts.

Axiological sociology and the pragmatic turn

It has long been a challenge for sociologists to investigate values as a specific and worthy topic – beyond a mere section of opinion polls (Rokeach 1973; Inglehart 1977) – as long as it was framed inside a Bourdieusian or post-Marxist paradigm, for which values tend to be either a "myth" or an "ideology". This critical paradigm, still quite powerful today in contemporary sociology, considers actors' representations not as a reality to be analyzed, but rather as an illusion to be unveiled, or as an ideology to be denounced: hence the dismissing of the very notion of "value" as a mere "belief" having no other function than to hide interests (Bourdieu and Darbel 1966). For example, when the school fails to fully implement the ideal of equality, the latter is dismissed as an illusion imposed by "dominants" in order to better establish the "social reproduction" of inequalities (Bourdieu and Passeron 1970). There, no place is left for the collective, interactional, reflexive and argumentative dimensions of human experience, to which representations belong and, in particular, axiological representations, that is, values (Heinich 2007a, 2017; Bidet 2008).

The situation began to change when the domination of Bourdieu's thought in sociology (especially in France during the last 20 years of the twentieth century) began to be challenged by a number of intellectual turns achieved in the 1990s, all of them having to do with the rise of pragmatism. Parallel to the American linguistic pragmatism initiated by John Austin and John Searle (Austin 1962; Searle 1969) and to the American philosophical trend initiated by John Dewey

(Dewey 1939; Bidet et al. 2011), these pragmatic turns in sociology are mainly due to two major French schools.

The first one appeared around Bruno Latour and his followers, with actor–network theory (ANT) and the replacement of a macro, explicative and determinist paradigm by a micro, descriptive and grounded on agency (including the agency of things) program (Latour 1984, 1989; Callon 1988; Akrich et al. 2006). As for the second one, it came out around Luc Boltanski and Laurent Thévenot: after shifting "from critical sociology to the sociology of criticism" (Boltanski 1990), it became possible to take seriously, and fully address, actors' justifications of their actions (Boltanski and Thévenot 1991) as well as their actual relationship to objects (Thévenot 2006).

Both schools were based on the seminal notion of "*épreuves*" (tests), which anchors sociological investigation in the actual situations met by actors. And both opened the way for an acritical and thus more comprehensive approach to actions and representations (Lemieux 2018). Their double anchoring in empirical investigations and in more general and theoretical issues, even sometimes expanding beyond their discipline, testifies to their belonging to the very tradition of French sociology (Heilbron 2020).

Among several important consequences, this pragmatic renewal of sociology fostered the development of an empirical sociology of valuation (Cefaï et al. 2015). Following both Latour's and Boltanski and Thévenot's breakings with the Bourdieusian critical paradigm, there appeared a number of sociological attempts to address actual processes of valuation, justification or expertise observed *in situ* (Dodier 1995; Trepos 1996; Lamont and Thévenot 2000; Kaufmann 2012; Vatin 2012), be it in the fields of medicine (Dodier 1993), auctions (Bessy and Chateauraynaud 1995), visual arts (Heinich 1998, 2000), music (Hennion and Fauquet 2000), journalism (Lemieux 2000), tasting (Hennion 2004), law (Karpik 2007), national heritage (Heinich 2009a) or film critique (Pasquier et al. 2015). Their pragmatic groundings opened up a quite new approach to the issue of values: far from the mainstream "sociology of values" (Rokeach 1973; Inglehart 1977; Galland and Roudet 2005) based on statistical surveys in the line of electoral sociology and the sociology of consumption, new and more qualitative methods of investigation could thus be experimented (Heinich 2006), grounded either on field observation of valuations or on the systematic analysis of a body of controversies (Heinich 1993, 2009b; Chateauraynaud and Torny 1999; de Blic and Lemieux 2005; Chateauraynaud 2011; Berthoin-Antal et al. 2015; Chaumont 2017).

Owing to this pragmatic turn, several advances have been completed regarding what should be called "sociology of valuation" rather than "sociology of values": let us focus here on three main ones. First, the notion of value can no longer be reduced either to the ethical dimension (Forsé and Parodi 2004) or to the economic dimension

(Boltanski and Esquerré 2017): many other dimensions of actors' axiological resources have been opened up, grounded on the values of efficiency, authenticity, beauty, pleasure, spirituality, meaning, celebrity, legality, rarity, originality, sustainability, universality, etc. (Heinich et al. 2014; Heinich 2017).

Second, this pragmatic turn in the sociology of valuation avoids the long-standing confusion between values and norms, and the inappropriate reduction of the former to the latter: principles of valuation now appear as actual groundings for norms of action. Values and norms are definitely two different entities, belonging to specific ontologies: the ontology of representations regarding values, the ontology of directions for actions regarding norms (Heinich 2017). Indeed, analyzing the production of norms, their effects and their transgressions certainly allowed fundamental contributions to sociology (Goffman 1959; Becker 1963; Elias 1969). But the exclusive focus on norms tends to hide what makes them efficient, namely their grounding on relatively consensual axiological principles (Heinich 2020a).

Third, this pragmatic turn makes it possible to consolidate the orientation of sociology towards a scientific and no longer a moral or political aim, by understanding and explaining actors' relationship to axiological principles (or "values") through their contextual implementations and justifications (Lamont 1992, 2012; Boltanski 1993, 2004; Kaufmann 2012; Ogien 2016; Heinich 2017; Kaufmann and Gonzalez 2017). Far beyond the mere issue of valuation, and far beyond French borders, this indeed can be seen as an important step in the history of sociology (Heinich 2020a; Kuipers and Franssen 2020).

A model for axiological sociology

In the line of this pragmatic turn in the sociology of valuation, I proposed a model helping to analyze the three kinds of valuation: measure, attachment and judgment (Heinich 2017, 2020a, 2020b). Based on actual valuation processes observed in their context of production, this model has been initiated through the analysis of controversies about bullfighting (Heinich 1993), contemporary art (Heinich 1995) and national heritage (Heinich 2009), most of them dealing with tensions between aesthetic and ethical values. It relied on two major theoretical tools: first, Goffman's *Frame Analysis* (Goffman 1974), no longer applied to the status of experience but to the status of value judgments, through the notion of "value registers" or "value realms" ("*registres de valeurs*"); and, second, Boltanki's and Thévenot's work on justification (Boltanski et Thévenot 1991). However, contrary to the latter, the model encompasses not only processes of justification of actions but, more generally, any kind of valuation, be it about things, persons, actions or states of the world:

hence an opening of the repertoire of values, up to the 16 "value registers" that have been identified until now.

The term "value registers", or "registers of valuing", has also been used in quite a similar way by Frank Heut and Annemarie Mol in their analysis of value judgments about the quality of tomatoes (Heuts and Mol 2013). They evidenced five main registers: "monetary", "handling", "naturalness", "sensual" and "historical time". In the model I propose these are but five possible registers out of 16, and they respectively correspond to what I named the "economic" register (values of profit or accurate price, etc.), the "operative" or "functional" register (values of efficiency, utility, strength, etc.), the "pure" register (values of purity, authenticity, integrity, etc.), the "aesthesic" register (values of pleasure, sensuality, etc.), and finally something which is not a register but a "value amplifier", that is ancientness or, on the contrary, innovation (see below).

Regarding the valuation of tomatoes, one could possibly add the "aesthetic" register, provided that their beauty or good-looking aspect would have been used as a criterion; the "ethical" register, provided that the social conditions of producers would have been taken into account in the valuation processes; the "civic" register, provided that the national origin would have been at stake; the "juridical" register, provided that the legal status of producers would have been raised; the "domestic" register, provided that the familial aspect of tomato growing or eating would have appeared; the "affective" register, provided that the capacity of tomatoes to elicit sentimental feelings would have come to the fore; the "technical" register, provided that the high technological level of agricultural devices would have been underlined; the "reputational" register, provided that the celebrity or good reputation of a tomato brand would have been invoked; or else the "hermeneutic" register, provided that tomatoes would have been interpreted as a symbol of, let's say, western tradition. Only the "mystic" register (values of spirituality, transcendence, etc.), the "epistemic" register (values of knowledge, of scientific truth), and the "ludic" register (values of playfulness, irony, etc.) have few chances to be observed regarding the valuation of tomatoes.

Having been tested on a variety of domains (not only art, national heritage and design but also moral conflicts, sports, religion, politics, etc.), this model offers a wide repertoire of categories of values implemented in valuation processes, while remaining synthetic enough to be easily handled. The registers have been evidenced owing to an inductive and empirical method (contrary to more speculative or theoretical lists of values), borrowing more from the structuralist approach (evidencing the underlying "grammar" which implicitly sustains actors' actions, as in Boltanski's and Thévenot's perspective) than to the description of networks through which things and persons

are connected, as in Bruno Latour's ANT approach (Latour 2006; Heinich 2007b).

In this model, values are defined as collective mental representations, and so are the value registers owing to which some values are more easily connected to others according to the contexts, to the nature of the valuated object, and to the status of the valuating subject. This means of course that, as for any kind of representation, these axiological principles are cultural, that is collectively shared in a same temporal and spatial context. However, they are by no way "subjective" or "arbitrary", as a basic constructivist approach would put it: no more subjective or arbitrary than the grammar of the language we speak.

Valuations rely not only on axiological principles carried on by *actors* in the valuating process, but also on the *context* in which this process occurs (a dimension which can be grasped only through an empirical and pragmatic method), and on the objective properties of the valuated *objects*, that is, the "affordances" they offer to the perception and valuation of their "qualities" (Gibson 1977). Affordances, qualities or criteria, axiological principles, value registers and, finally, "value amplifiers" and "qualification regimes" (see below): such are the main steps in the architecture of the axiological grammar according to which valuation processes are implemented. This model provides rather productive tools for the analysis of value judgments as we will verify now with the case of the fire at Notre-Dame de Paris in the perspective of a pragmatic sociology of valuations.

Emotions as revealers of valuations

Since the pragmatic method is based on the observation of actions in their actual situations, it requires to observe spontaneous acts or speech acts rather than to rely on interviews, which hardly allow taking the context into account while it is as relevant in the valuation process as the valuated object and the valuating subject. This is why our axiological sociology model would rather use conflictual or emotionally loaded situations, since they tend to elicit spontaneous valuations.

Considered from the valuation perspective, emotions often reveal values, be they implemented or transgressed in the object which elicits an emotional response: for example, emotional reactions in front of a beautiful thing or person, or in front of a moral action, or in front of a state of the world when disturbed by violence, testify to the existence of the value of beauty, the value of charity or the value of peace in the mind of the moved subject. Hence the utility of emotions – and, more generally, of affects (Gregg and Seigworth 2010) – for sociologists, since they inform actors' value systems.

This property has been noticed by philosophers (Livet 2002; Joas and Wiegandt 2008) as well as by political scientists (Faure and

Négrier 2017) and by sociologists (Kaufmann and Quéré 2020). According to Livet (2002), emotions signal a dissonance between a given situation and the expected value(s), so that "they reveal our values to us, in a sense quite similar to that in which our choices reveal our preferences … It is by experiencing emotions that we reveal our values to ourselves. Emotions are necessary for humans to reveal to themselves the values they are attached to" (Livet 2002: 177–178).

But emotions are not or are rarely direct expressions of values: they are rather indirect effects, expressed in a language which is not primarily that of verbal value judgment but that of a physical reaction. Emotion can thus be considered as the physiological response to the feeling that a value is strongly present in an object or, on the contrary, unexpectedly absent. This is even more obvious regarding collective emotions; that is, according to Livet, those which are "shared by others" and experienced "in coordinated activities" (Livet 2002: 124), since "sharing your emotions means making sure that others confirm that they demonstrate our sensitiveness to recognized values" (Livet 2002: 134).

Collective emotions related to national heritage are particularly emblematic due to their intensity, perceivable through several indicators: the amount of people concerned, the extent of media dissemination of emotional manifestations, and their duration over time (Heinich 2012; Fabre 2013). This is obviously the case with Notre-Dame de Paris on fire, since it aroused considerable emotional demonstrations: crowds of people gathering on the site in front of the flames, some of them crying, screaming, calling their friends on the phone, photographing frantically, etc. Dozens of officials making statements in front of microphones and cameras, hundreds of journalists describing the situation: this was indeed quite an event, and also a "media event" (Dayan and Katz 1992).

The fire at Notre-Dame de Paris is thus a case study for heritage-related disasters: reactions were immediate and long-lasting; they came from the whole world; and they got huge echoes in the media and social networks. Moreover, emotions aroused by this catastrophe were dramatically enlarged both on the spatial axis, through their international character, connected to Notre-Dame's effective status as "World Heritage"; and on the temporal axis, through their sharing on social networks. But the latter phenomenon only extends in space and accelerates over time the need for communicating one's emotions to others: nothing indicates that Facebook or Twitter might modify their qualitative content.

As we shall see now, the emotional reactions to the fire can thus be used, first, as an indicator of the highly valorized status of the monument; and second, as an expression of the various axiological principles according to which it is endowed with such value, through

the different contexts in which these reactions are publicized and the different categories of people who react to the event.

The case of Notre-Dame de Paris in the light of axiological sociology

This case has been the exclusive focus of a workshop on valuations held at the EHESS (Ecole des Hautes Etudes en Sciences Sociales, Paris) during the 2019–20 academic year. Under my direction, participants[1] collectively constructed a corpus of public reactions, as exhaustive as possible and including all the themes having appeared within the first months after the fire: the fire itself, its causes and its consequences, plus the issues of restoration, donations, laws, lead pollution, etc.

The corpus includes: all the articles posted on the website of *Le Monde* in the 24 hours after the fire; statements by politicians; statements by Catholic authorities; intellectuals' op-eds published in newspapers; the practice of selfies in front of Notre-Dame and the reactions to them; controversies about donations made by wealthy entrepreneurs; debates between experts on restoration and the points of view of non-specialists on the same issue; parliamentary debates preceding the vote of a new law on national heritage at the end of July 2019; and articles on the main websites and newspapers belonging to the French intellectual world (*Le Monde*, *The Conversation*, *AOC*, *La Tribune de l'Art*, etc.).

Given the difficulty in building coherent and relatively compact corpuses, we did not try to include reactions from other countries, which would have required many more participants and much heavier technical tools as well as financial means. This does not mean of course that we consider the case of Notre-Dame de Paris as a French issue alone: on the contrary, one of its specificities is indeed its international resonance. What is French is our corpus, for technical reasons – not our object. Once more the pragmatic approach, by focusing on situated actions, may imply a certain restriction of the items it is able to study.

Conversely, reactions themselves have not been restricted in any way: once a corpus has been defined, every item in it is considered worth being taken into account. The aim is to describe and analyze the whole space of possibilities regarding reactions to the fire, even the more minor or marginal ones. Thus, indifference, detachment and/or even hostility are part of the corpuses, even if they hardly appear. This also belongs to a pragmatic sociology of valuations.

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[1] Namely: Frank Beuvier (anthropologist), Jacques de La Porte (jurist), Nicole Dyonet (historian), Zinedine Gaid (sociologist), Quentin Mazel (sociologist), Tsolag Paloyan (discourse analyst), Nicolas Sarzeaud (art historian), Maho Sebiane (anthropologist), Vincent Timsit (sociologist).

Finally, no statistical method is at stake in our approach: our aim is not to measure the proportion of such or such reactions, but to make explicit the value system they are based on. This is coherent with the comprehensive perspective of our axiological sociology, far from the usual explicative perspective.

The three meanings of "value"

While our analysis is still in progress, a few results can already be displayed. A first axis concerns the shifts between the three meanings of the word "value" (Heinich 2017): first, value as "worth", that is, the importance given to an object (be it a thing, a person, an action or a state of the world); second, value as a "good", that is, the state of any object once it has been endowed with "value" in the first sense; and third, value as axiological "principle" (for example authenticity, beauty, antiquity)… according to which "some" value, in the first sense, is attributed to an object which thus becomes "a" value in the second sense.

In the case of Notre-Dame, the first meaning – value as worth – would appear through a statement according to which, for example, "The cathedral has considerable value"; but in this case no such example is available, since it goes without saying for everyone, all the most in the context of the fire : no need to argue. Contrariwise, the second meaning – value as a "good" – is very present as much in lay people's interviews as in renowned politicians or intellectuals' statements, when they publicly express their emotion by multiplying laudatory qualifiers: "It is such a jewel"; "It is indeed one of the wonders of the world"; "We're losing a treasure"; etc. In so doing, they merely reaffirm the consensus as to "the" value of Notre-Dame, in the first sense, and therefore its status of "value" as a common good, in the second sense. But such utterances provide no clues allowing understanding on what kinds of axiological principles (or "values" in the third sense) this huge valuation is grounded.

This is why positions taken in controversial situations are more interesting to analyze, since they uncover actors' "values" in the third sense; that is to say the different and sometimes opposite principles of valuation they mobilize. For example, the value of sacredness happens to be opposed to the value of national community, depending on whether one mobilizes the mystical register (Catholic worship: "*Le sacré coeur de la chrétienté*") or the civic register (common good for all citizens: "*Elle appartient au peuple français tout entier*"); the same with antiquity and authenticity *versus* modernity and originality, depending on whether the preference goes to "identical restoration" ("*On doit absolument la restaurer à l'identique*") or to an "architectural gesture" ("*Il faut un geste architectural hors du commun*"); the same with universality, referring to the international

resonance of the event ("*Le monde entier pleure Notre-Dame*"), *versus* familiarity, referring to the living environment of Parisians ("*Les Parisiens sont si attachés à sa chère silhouette*").

A plurality of axiological principles and value registers

In the light of this model, reactions to the fire clearly demonstrate that in the case of Notre-Dame the axiological principles go beyond the values usually associated with historical monuments: namely, beauty, antiquity, meaning and, above all, authenticity (Heinich 2009). The latter, which is present in all segments of the heritage-making chain, refers to a continuous link between the current state of an item and its original state – a continuity which, of course, is submitted to all kinds of hazards, which specialists passionately discuss (as with the many evocations of Viollet-le-Duc and his restoration choices in the nineteenth century).

Once defined as the continuity of the link between the original and the present states of an object, the value of authenticity can be intuitively associated with a same family of values, such as purity, integrity, cleanliness, etc. This family of values – or "value register" – has been named the *pure* register, because of the centrality of the value of purity. This register is quite present in the controversies regarding what is to be done in order to replace the framework and the spire of the cathedral: restore it or not, restore it as it was at the origin, as it was before the fire, or else organize an architectural competition for a new proposal? And, in any case, what kind of material should be used? Wood, iron, concrete, other? Meanwhile this "pure" register is also present, together with the *ethical* register, in the many controversies about lead pollution: once a significant quantity of lead had been discovered in August around the burnt monument, discussions were also aimed at the preservation of workers' health, not only at the preservation of the monument's integrity – both being sometimes contradictory, hence weighty discussions and disagreements between those who care about the integrity of heritage (heritage lovers and specialists, focusing on the monument) and those who care about the integrity of persons at work (work inspectors, focusing on workers).

Much less controversial is the value of beauty ("*L'un des plus beaux édifices au monde*" [One of the world's finest constructions] belonging to the *aesthetic* register: it is present in many discourses in order to justify "the" value (first meaning: worth) attributed to the cathedral, which participates in making it "a" value (second meaning: good). In this aesthetic register, beauty is closely associated with the emphasis on monumentality ("*Un sublime monument*" [A sublime monument], or with the role of good taste which is more or less explicitly invoked by certain art historians regarding past or future restorations ("*L'horrible flèche ajoutée par Viollet-le-Duc*" [The horrible spire added by Viollet-Le-Duc].

Is Notre-Dame a symbol of Catholicism, or of western civilization, or of Paris? Here is the value of meaning or significance, belonging to the *hermeneutic* register. Significance, beauty, authenticity: here are three of the main values commonly associated with national or world heritage. But in the case of Notre-Dame on fire, other values and value registers are at stake, whether regarding Notre-Dame itself or regarding the many actors associated with the fire, be they persons, objects or institutions.

One can thus meet the *domestic* register, through the values of proximity to the cathedral or of familiarity of the landscape; the *affective* register, through the capacity of the building to elicit emotional manifestations of distress or of attachment; the *economic* register, through the issues of funding its reconstruction and of tourism and local trade; the *civic* register, through the expressed feeling of national mourning; the *mystic* register, through the issue of religious worship as opposed to secular appropriations; the *ethical* register, through an emphasis on the heroism of firefighters ready to sacrifice themselves for the common good, or on the highly commented gestures of patrons offering a share of their fortune; the *technical* register, through confidence in the competence of experts; the *reputational* register, through the risk of letting architects perform an "architectural gesture" for the sole benefit of their own notoriety, or else through the possible transformation of gifts into mere sponsorship; the *operative* register, through the debates about the most appropriate materials regarding resistance to fire or the most rapid restoration technics regarding the anticipated schedule; the *legal* register, through the issue of regulations and charters governing the restoration of historical monuments; and even the *fun* register, through the many jokes that ran on social networks.

Value amplifiers and qualification regimes

Some other values do not belong to one or other register but can be found in any register. They are somehow special values, since their role is not only to valuate but also to enhance, to amplify other values: let us call them "value amplifiers". A basic one regarding historical monuments is antiquity, or sustainability: it has often been used in order to insist on the high value of Notre-Dame, since its antiquity enhances its beauty as well as its authenticity and its significance. Another recurrent amplifier is universality, as Notre-Dame is valuated as a worldwide concern, a "World Heritage" in UNESCO's terms. Sustainability and universality belong to the "community regime": a qualification regime granting an unquestioned preference to what is common, multiple, shared, conventional, etc.

Opposite to the "community regime" is the "singularity regime", granting an unquestioned preference to what is particular, rare,

original, etc. (Heinich 1996 [1991]). This singularity regime governs two "value amplifiers": rarity and originality. The former has also been very much used in order to enhance the value of Notre-Dame as exceptionally beautiful, authentic, significant, ancient, etc. As for the latter, originality is much less present: it is used only by those who request an "architectural gesture" in order to replace the spire, pleading for renewing rather than for restoring it. This scarcity of the value of originality is quite understandable since it is an amplifier on the temporal axis (turned to the present and to the future) whereas rarity is an amplifier on the spatial axis – exactly as antiquity is an amplifier on the temporal axis (turned to the past) whereas universality is an amplifier on the spatial axis. So the crossing of the space and time axes with the community and singularity regimes clearly organizes the distribution of the four value amplifiers.

The "grammar" of valuations in the case of Notre-Dame thus clearly appears: antiquity, universality and rarity amplify the values of authenticity (pure register), beauty (aesthetic register) and significance regarding the history of France or of Catholicism or of western civilization (hermeneutic register), as well as the values of proximity with ancestors and of familiarity of the living environment (domestic register); the worship value (mystical register); the value of architectural prowess (technical register); the patriotic value of an emblem of French nation (civic register); the sentimental value for "Paris lovers" (affective register). At least eight value registers and three amplifiers are thus present in the valuations of Notre-Dame itself, without even considering the ones associated with its reconstruction.

Notre-Dame de Paris as a "total axiological fact"?

Through the emotional responses to the fire, Notre-Dame magnificently illustrates all the values of heritage: it links people both in space to a planetary community (value of universality) and in time to their ancestors and to their descendants (values of antiquity and sustainability); and its uniqueness makes it irreplaceable (value of rarity).

So the intensity of emotions in front of the disaster (even if not everybody shared them) can be explained not only by the aesthetic, technical, symbolic or religious qualities of the monument, but also by its very patrimonial status. Indeed, any object endowed with a "heritage function" must satisfy a double hypothesis: on the one hand, the hypothesis of its community of belonging, insofar as it constitutes a common good (whether at the private level of a family or at the much more general level of a nation or even of humanity); and, on the other hand, the hypothesis of the sustainability of its value, insofar as it must come from the past and has to be transmitted to future generations. The value of universality and the value of sustainability,

combined with the value of rarity, are thus the main values revealed by emotions when faced with the loss of any element of heritage (Heinich 2009).

Notre-Dame thus carries various highly prized values: hence the intensity of emotions aroused by the fire; but hence also, for the sociologist, the heuristic nature of these emotions as they reveal the multiplicity of values invested in a heritage object. The number of value registers, importance of amplifiers in time and in space, relevance of both community and singularity regimes; and, finally, shifts between the three meanings of "value" as worth, as good and as axiological principle: indeed, Notre-Dame ticks the largest number of boxes that one can imagine in the axiological repertoire specific to "our" culture. Following Marcel Mauss's analysis of gift as a "total social fact" (Mauss 1950), should not we then consider Notre-Dame-de-Paris as a "total axiological fact"?

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